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ABSTRACT

This instructional guide and course outline is designed for use in teaching European culture and civilization through a thematic approach to selected, representative schools of literature. Charact ristic periods of European culture are reflected in the literature. The point of departure for each unit is always seen to be man--the central force around which society develops. Scme 34 topics spanning medieval scciety and the future of literary trends are outlined. Description of instructional objectives and of technical details includes suggesticns for student evaluation. (RL)

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Half Hollow Hills High School
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INSTRUCTIONAL GUIDE
COURSE OUTLINE

EUROPEAN CULTURE AND CIVILIZATION

COURSE DESCRIPTION: The course is designed for the student who has completed his foreign language study and who would now like a broader survey of European culture. There will be a concentration on literature, history, art and music up to modern times. The lectures, discussions and readings will be done in English.

LENGTH OF COURSE: 40 weeks
5 recitations a week

PREREQUISITE: Successful completion of two years of a foreign language.

PHILOSOPHY & OBJECTIVES:

Man has been and is now the central force of all universal development. His thoughts, actions, beliefs, prejudices, fears, hopes, and ethnic idiosyncracies have been the dynamic forces that have created the heritage of western society. Understanding and admiration of himself, and of respective civilizations grow from the interaction of man on himself, his society and on foreign ones.

The human being seeks communication at all times, whether it be for his own egotistical desires or in the sincere search for universal truth. Literature has been the main depository for the questions, expressions, beliefs and answers of man. Although ethnic overtones are apparent in every literary work, nevertheless a final analysis reveals that man is a universal being. Emotions, thoughts and quests know no national boundaries; man is a totally eternal free being. The approach, the language and form of a literary work can be influenced by cultural patterns, but the final analysis reveals continuity of universal thought.

It is in the literary heritage of each nation that one finds each respective raison d'etre, i.e., the compelling force that drives man on, despite strife, persecution and death, to his ultimate destiny. Although time can alter the moment and the milieu in which man acts, the universal quest remains: who, what, where and why is man.

Literature is only one means through which man expresses himself. The art, music and philosophy of each era and nation must also be considered in the analysis of man. Each force plays its vital role in shaping the destiny of man and in revealing his philosophical being.

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The course is not intended to be one in the humanities, rather one in which the student will be able to trace the development of modern society as logical and inevitable.

The point of departure for each segment of the course will be man as the central force around which society develops. Man as being:animal; creator:destructor; hunter:hunted; evil:good; seeker:pursuer; etc., will be explored thematically and chronologically. For reasons of logical development, the course will be taught by schools of literary developments and thematically within each period. A review of past material will be integrated with the material presently being studied, thereby creating a unified concept of man in his national and universal environment.

SPECIAL MATERIALS:

Texts: The series from Macmillan Company, Literature of the Western World, Vols. 2 and 3 are recommended for source material.

Films: Films and filmstrips will be used to give the student visual instruction on each literary period. The use of the Life series on art and music is suggested.

Other materials are available in stencilled form and will be combined into a notebook as the year progresses.

TOPICAL STRUCTURE: First Quarter

I. Introductory Lectures.

A. Medieval Society. An historical outline of Western Europe through the thirteenth century.

B. Medieval Man. A philosophical presentation of man in his society.

II. The National Epics of Germany, France and Spain.

A. The Nibelungenlied. Early Germanic pagan saga.

B. The Song of Roland. Christian chivalric tale.

C. The Poem of the Cid. Later Christian chivalric saga.

III. Lecture on the High Middle Ages. A study of the political, literary, intellectual, artistic and social events of the time.

IV. The Minnesang poets. A study of medieval German love poetry.

V. Roman de la Rose. A study of the noble and bourgeois attitudes on woman.

VI. Francois Villon. A literary and social study of the lyrical poetry to reveal the approaching age of the Rennaissance.

VII. Lectures on the Renaissance.

A. The Northern Renaissance. A study of humanism in Germany, Holland and France. A philosophical study of the works of Erasmus.

B. The Romance Renaissance. A study on the influence of Italy, the Catholic Church, art and the literature from the South of Europe.

C. A debate on the philosophies of Scholasticism and Humanism. A demonstration on the reasons for the growth of Humanism.

D. Music: Medieval and Renaissance (850-1580): Palestrina, Praetorius

Second Quarter

VIII. The Golden Age of Italian Literature

A. Dante Alighieri. A study of the ideas presented through his literature.

B. Francis Petrarch. The development of the idyllic love from the sonnets to Laura. The development of lyric poetry.

C. La Pleiade. Comparison of the influence of Petrarch on Ronsard and the French poets. Explanation of the revival of the Greek influence on literature. Oral reports.

D. Giovanni Boccaccio. A study of several stories from the Decameron.

IX. The Golden Age of Spanish Literature.

A. Miguel de Cervantes. A study of Don Quixote noting the quest for truth, beauty.

B. Lope de Vega. A study of the playwright's attitudes on life and society, The Sheep Well.

C. Pedro Calderon. A study of honor and the family through the play La Vida es Sueno.

X. Literary Development of the Reformation in Religion and Politics.

A. Niccolo Machiavelli. A study of the political and social conventions of the era from excerpts of the work, The Prince.

B. Francois Rabelais. A contrast to Machiavelli through excerpts of Gargantua and Pantagruel dealing with the search for religious and political reform.

XI. A detailed study of the Reformation with lectures on the Inquisition, Calvin, Luther (95 Thesis), Erasmus, Praise of Folly

XII. Golden Age of French Literature. A study of the Neo-Classical movement in Europe.

A. Lecture on the importance of France during the seventeenth century. Decline of the other cultures. The importance of social conduct-the honnete homme and Knigge. Why is man? A study of the Baroque period in art and music: Monteverdi, Frescobaldi,

Corelli, Scarlatti, Vivialdi, Lully, Couperin, Rameau, Schütz, Bach, Handel and Telemann

B. The introduction of Spinoza's idea on beauty and its importance on the society of the times.

C. The rise of Classicism in France. A study of the importance of Descartes through the literary works of Corneille and Racine.

XIV. A comparative study of Don Juan, written by Tirso de Molina and Moliere. An explanation of the identical themes of evil, death and revenge with the ethnic idiosyncracies in each work.

XV. A study of the rise of mysticism in literature: an explanation of the writings of the mystics in Spain, the Jansenists in France and the mystics in Germany.

Third Quarter

XV. The Age of Enlightenment-The Eighteenth Century

A. Lectures on the enlightenment period in France. A study of Voltaire, Montesquieu. A discussion of who is man--Physiocrats.

B. The decline of Spain and Italy.

C. The Age of Enlightenment in Germany. A study of Gottsched.

D. Music: Classic (1730-1750: Roccoco; 1730-1790) Boccherini, Cherubini, Gluck, Mozart, Hadyn, Beethoven.

XVI. The French Revolution and the Napoleonic Era!

The influence of Jean Jacques Rousseau on the Romantic movement.

XVII. Sturm und Drang-the pre-romantic movement in Germany. The Golden Age of German Literature.

A. A study of Lessing and Herder

B. A study of early Goethe and Schiller.

C. Lecture on the second humanism.

XIXII The Romantic Movement in Spain and France.

A. Lecture on the plagarism of the other nations from Germany.

B. A study of the poetic works of Alfred de Musset and Alfred de Vigny.

XIX. The Transition Period in Germany from Romanticism to Realism.

A. A study of the romantic works of Heine; the German Romantics

B. Music: Weber, Schubert, Mendelssohn, Schumann, Wagner, Bruckner, Brahms, Mahler, R. Strauss

XX . Realism in the Nineteenth Century.

A. A study of Realism in Germany through the work of Heine.

B. A study of Realism in France with the work of Honore de Balzac.

XXI . Naturalism.

A. An explanation of the development of naturalism from Realism.

B. The study of German naturalism through the works of Gerhard Hauptmann.

C. The study of French Realism through the works of Emile Zola.

XXII . Symbolism and Impressionism in France.

A. The rise of symbolist poetry studied through the works of Baudelaire, Verlaine and Rimbaud.

B. An explanation of the simultaneous rise of the Impressionistic period in music and art. A study of the musical works of Ravel, Debussy and Gounod, Saint-Saens.

XXIII. The Generation of 1898 in Spain.

A. A study of the works of Unamuno, Garcia Lorca, Juan Jimenez.

XXIV. Lecture on the end of the ninteenth century.

A. A review of the events that will influence the modern writers.

B. Modern trends already apparent in Europe.

XXV . Lecture on the rise of Socialism and Communism in Europe.

A. A study of their inevitable answer to the needs of the day.

B. A study of the ideas and works of Marx and Nietzsche.

Fourth Quarter

XXVI . Lecture on Europe in the beginning of the 20th Century.

A. The philosophical study of what and why is man. The revival of Paris as the international center for the arts.

B. The rise of neo-humanism. A study of the influence of Freud and Dostoyevsky.

XXVII . A study of the influence of Freud and Dostoyevsky on youth. The importance of Andre Gide to the revolt of the young against society.

XXVIII. The rise of the Expressionists.

A. The impact of Thomas Mann

B. The rise of the Dadaists.

1. The movement in art.
2. The movement in the literary works of Apollinaire and Aragon, Rilke, George, Remarque.

XXIX. Lecture on the Second Twenty-five Years of the Twentieth Century.

A. The political situation due to the rise of Hitler and Mussolini.

B. The effect of the Spanish Revolution.

C. The fall of France.

XXX . The voice of the writers during the War.

A. Jean Cocteau.

B. Jean Paul Sartre

C. Jacques Prevert

XXXI . Explanation of the Rise of Existentialism. The influence of Sartre and Kierkegaard.

XXXII . The Third Twenty-Five Years of the Twentieth Century.

A. A study of the modern theatre in France and Germany

1. Jean-Paul Sartre; Jean Giraudoux; Eugene Ionesco; Jean Anouilh; Samuel Beckett; Jean Genet
2. Durrenmatt; Frisch; Weiss; Hoffmannsthal; Brecht.

B. A study of the modern poets of France and Germany.

1. Jacques Prevert; Paul Eluard; St. John Perse.
2. Hermann Hesse.

C. A study of the modern novelists of France and Germany

1. Albert Camus; Alain Robbe-Grillet.
2. Kafka; Grass; Böll; Bochert

D. Music of the Twentieth Century: Milhaud, Schönberg, Hindemith, Falla.

XXXIII. A. A discussion of the future literary trends of man.

SUPPLEMENTARY PROCEDURES:

1. Notebooks are required in which all supplementary material, lecture notes, etc., shall be kept.

2. A bibliography on each literary period will be distributed to the student, containing suggested topics for research. The student will select the materials of interest to him and report on it.

3. Outside readings and research are to be encouraged. Conference periods can be set up at the convenience of the teacher.

4. Field trips are considered an essential part of the course work. A minimum of four trips into New York City shall be scheduled throughout the year for the purpose of viewing at first hand the cultural heritage of the Western World.

   SUGGESTIONS: Metropolitan Museum of Art; Museum of Modern Art; Guggenheim Museum; Whitney Museum; Spanish Historical Society; the Cloisters.

   In addition to the planned trips, every effort is to be made to attend cultural events within the surrounding areas that are pertinent to the material being studied.

EVALUATION PROCEDURES:

Every student shall be assigned one topic from a list distributed at the beginning of each period to research and report upon. It will be at the discretion of the teacher whether the report is to be done orally or in written form. This report will take place of a structured examination on each period and will be graded as a final summation of each era.

The course is designed to be one consisting of lectures and discussion. The student will also be evaluated on his participation and contributions to the structured talks.

The midyear and final examination shall be structured to encompass the work within the entire period. A general evaluation and review of the periods will be stressed rather than a detailed analysis of each individual literary work.

Prepared by:

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